

## U.S. Election Contest Questions

**Question 1:** Women now play an important role in US politics, but this has not always been the case. Women did not gain the right to vote until the Nineteenth Amendment was passed in 1920. Who was Jeannette Rankin and what important role did she play in women's political history?

**Question 2:** In 2008, President Barack Obama made history by becoming the United States first African American president. Who was Hiram Revel and how did he also help to forward the role of African American's in US politics?

**Question 3:** In the US, Presidential and Vice Presidential candidates often spend a lot of time campaigning in "swing states", otherwise known as "battleground states". Both candidates know which states are likely to vote for them, but these swing states are where neither candidate holds a reliable lead with the voters. What is the reason that these swing states are so important to the candidates?

**Question 4:** When the US Constitution was written, nothing was included about political parties, and in fact, the Founders sought various arrangements to avoid the forming of parties and factions. Regardless of these intentions, political parties have since become an important part of the political landscape, and the US has largely become a two party system of Republicans and Democrats. How does the Electoral College system work to keep the two party system in place and make it difficult for a third party to gain a foothold in a presidential election?

**Question 5:** In the US, citizens can vote at age 18. In the 2008 election, the youth vote was essential in President Obama's election, and both candidates recognize the importance in 2012. The Millennial Generation, those born from the early 1980's to the mid-1990's, will be flocking to the polls this year. How are they different from previous generations and what do they believe are the most important issues the U.S. faces?

**Question 6:** Question: Considering the last 20th and 21st century's feminist movements from suffrage to women's reproductive rights, Hilary Clinton's run for the Democratic nomination in 2008 was a historic milestone in the United States. Although she dropped out of the running, she still maintains a political presence. What political role does Hilary Clinton currently occupy? What are some of the key responsibilities for this political role?

**Question 7:** Voting was once a privilege solely for white men in the United States. With the 15th and 19th amendments to the United States Constitution, citizens of any race, creed, or sex are able to vote. Following the 2008 presidential campaign, there was a change in voter demographics again but not due to amendments. What are some of the changes in the voting demographics following the 2008 election? What accounts for these changes?

**Question 8:** In the United States, the right to voice opinions is central to society's common beliefs. Civic groups enable diverse perspectives to be communicated. However, not all societies accept differing opinions. How do civil society groups online help support the representation of smaller factions of society?

**Question 9:** The U.S presidential election is in full swing. While each candidate has been fervently campaigning for months, both Governor Romney and President Obama have been campaigning more specifically in certain states. What are swing states? Why are swing states seemingly more important than non-swing states in the presidential election?

**Question 10:** After President Obama gained office, there was an out pour of complaints from the general public demanding to see his birth certificate. Because being born in the United States is a requirement to being the president of the United States, if President Obama had not been born in the United States, his presidency would be illegitimate. What are other requirements for running for president of the United States?

**Question 11:** While it is sometimes difficult to imagine a world without the ever present presence of technology, before the 21st century any news political or otherwise was communicated through various mediums besides the internet. Through what other mediums was news communicated? What are the benefits of being able to access political news in such mediums as the internet and entertainment news shows in today's society?

**Question 12:** Americans have several important issues to consider as they decide who to vote for in this year's election. What are two key issues and each candidate's stance on them?

**Question 13:** The American political system has two main parties, Republican and Democrat, and the two presidential candidates tend to reflect the views of the party they belong to. What are the basic beliefs of each party? Do third parties hold any role in the political system?